September 3, 2002

Public Notice for 401 Certification
Vintana Bridges
WDID No. 1B02096WNSO
Sonoma County

On June 6, 2002, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from Mr. Ted Winfield, on behalf of Ryder Companies, requesting Federal Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification for the Vintana Bridges in Sonoma County. The application was deemed complete on July 24, 2002. The proposed project causes disturbances to waters of the United States associated with Mark West Creek HSA #114.23.

The proposed project includes the upgrading and modifying of three bridges and replacement of an existing culvert which are located on Amber Ridge Way, Koeler Road and Woody Creek Lane in the Town of Windsor, Sonoma County, California. The purpose of the project is to return the channel at each site to a more natural geometry than is permitted by the existing structures.

The proposed project consists of upgrading and modifying three bridges and replacing an existing culvert. These bridges and the culvert are considered to be substandard and do not meet the current specifications with respect to passing 100-year storm events. This has resulted in frequent flooding of surrounding lands, including several residences. The three bridges include Starr Creek Bridge at Amber Ridge Way, Starr Creek Bridge at Koeler Road, and Gumview Creek Bridge at Koeler Road. The culvert is off Woody Creek Lane where the roadway crosses Gumview Creek, and this culvert will be completely replaced.

The three bridge modifications will consist of a clear span modular bridge that will affix to support abutments at the top of the bank. According to the application, there will be no support structures in the bed of the creeks associated with the bridge structures. All exiting structures associated with the current bridges will be removed, including instream support structures, wing walls, and any additional features. Rock rip-rap will be placed along the banks of the creeks to protect the bridge abutments from erosion damage resulting from winter storm flows. The total footprint of the rip-rap within waters of the state are 180, 54, and 378 square feet (SQ.FT) in Starr Creek-Amber, Starr Creek-Koeler, Gumview Creek-Koeler, respectively.

A temporary bridge structure will be constructed at each of the three bridge sites to provide access to the residences and other traffic during the construction of the permanent bridge structures. There will be no instream supporting structures implemented in the construction of the temporary bridges.

The existing culvert located on Gumview Creek at Woody Creek Lane will be replaced with a larger diameter culvert, exact size was not given in application packet, and existing structures will be removed. A temporary bridge structure will be placed across Gumview Creek at a location that reduces impacts to riparian habitat.

The total area of impact to waters of the state associated with the construction of the three bridges and the culvert, and associated protective rock rip-rip along the creek banks is 962 sq. ft.

According to the application packet, the project itself will mitigate for adverse conditions currently existing in the four locations. The current capacity of the bridges and the culvert are substandard, which results in flooding and increased velocity and erosion in the vicinity of the structures. Removal of all existing structures and replacement with new bridge crossings and a larger culvert will result in a more natural hydrologic condition beneath each bridge and through the culvert. This will help to facilitate the re-establishment of a more natural creek environment and increased stability of the creek banks.

Impacted areas of the creek bank will be replanted using cuttings from native trees in nearby sections of creek. In addition, the rock rip-rap structures will be planted with riparian vegetation in areas where it is feasible. Circuit Rider Production will be preparing and implementing the riparian planting program. The replanted riparian vegetation will be monitored for a total of five years, and vegetation that fails to establish during the first three years will be replaced. A 75 percent minimum success criteria will be met by the replanting efforts.

The Town of Windsor, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this project qualifies for coverage under the following CEQA documents: Windsor Specific Plan Drainage Element, Final Environmental Impact Report, January 1992; Windsor Cumulative Impact Mitigation Program Update, Final Supplement Environmental Impact Report, February 7, 2000; Windsor Cumulative Impact Mitigation Program Update, Final Supplement Environmental Impact Report Addendum, April 12, 2000.

The nearest receiving water is Mark West Creek Hydrologic Unit No. 114.23.

The project is scheduled to begin during the fall of 2002 and end before October 15, 2002. Staff is proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341). Comments on this project should be submitted to Andrew Jensen at **jensa@rb1.swrcb.ca.gov** within 21 days of the posting of this notice.

(AJJ_vintanabridges)